

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.**

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Dear members of the Connecticut Human Services Committee:

I, Reynaldo Mejia, am a 38 year old man of Honduran nationality. I am a member of the Hartford Deportation Defense and I live in New Britain CT. I am in favor of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS because this is an important step forward in getting health insurance for our entire immigrant community.

My purpose for immigrating to this country was because of health problems. A year ago I had an accident working with a welding machine. A fire ember fell in my right eye and I started losing my cornea. Because of my economic situation, I could not get the money for a corneal operation. I thought this was my chance to get my sight back. I went to see a specialist, he did some tests and told me that my eye could accept a cornea, because the nerve of the cornea was still alive and that my operation could be performed. He then referred me to another specialist who was going to operate on me. The specialist quickly did a checkup on me and asked me if I had insurance. I told him that I did not have insurance. He went into his office, and when he came out he told me that he was not going to be able to operate on me because my eye was no longer alive. That was a very sad moment for me. After giving me that last bit of hope, I was deeply saddened that I was denied surgery because I did not have health insurance.

Committee members, we ask you to support S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Connecticut's immigrant community needs the support of HUSKY health insurance.